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G.R.S. IX—5]

Previous references. 1922. File No. 32-22

(Rg)

Serial Nos. 7

Later references.

Reserve

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

Serial Nos. One

Part B for March 23

SUBJECT

From,
Sri Belur Srinivasiengar, Advocate

Fds for consideration of Govt, his observations
on the Reforms Committee Report.

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P 10/(E)

25.11.23

Printed on the Multigraph.

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G. R. S. III-2]

General and Revenue Secretariat.

Ref File No. 32 of 19 2

Serial No.	
7	Letter dated 15-6-23 From Mr Belur Srinivasa Iyengar, Advocate Forwards for consideration of Govt, his observations on the Reforms Committees' Report. His suggestions have been tabulated under the respective heads separately. The letter has also been acknowledged in this Office No 25-26 Camp dated 25-6-23. Submd Sd 30.6.23. 30/6.

Put in appropriate record

NOTE—Contn. sheet.

G. R. S. III-2]

General and Revenue Secretariat.

File No. 32 of 1927.

Serial No.

This is apparently a resolution moved at the conference recently held at Bangalore but it is so worded that its meaning is not clear. In the speech made in moving the resolution, four suggestions have been made, two in connection with the Representative Assembly and two in connection with the Legislative Council:---

Representative Assembly.

(1) Nominations are out of place; and

(2) The Representative Assembly should be consulted in all legislative matters.

Legislative Council.

(1) The number of elected members should be increased; and

(2) It is desirable to have a non-official Deputy President.

The two suggestions in connection with the Representative Assembly and the first one in connection with the Legislative Council have been considered by Government and orders have already been passed on them. [These files have been separately submitted with draft order and submission note.]

As regards the last suggestion there is no room in the Legislative Council for a non-official Deputy President so long as the Members of Council are ex-officio members of the Legislative Council.

No further action is needed on these representations.

Ch. Secy.

Note—Contn. sheet.

DIARY No. 780

1922 — 1923

Chambers: Chandrasala, Chikpet.
Residence: Rangavilas, Mysore Bank Road,
BANGALORE CITY.
File No.
Dated June 15, 23

BELUR SRINIVASIENGAR, B.A. B.L.,
AND
K. N. SRINIVASAN, M.A., LL.B.,
ADVOCATES.

42329

Ref. 32-22-7

18 JUN 1923

To The Chief Secretary
to
Government of Mysore
Bangalore.

Sir,

I beg leave to send you herewith my observations on the "Local committee Report" on Institutional Developments in Mysore. I beg that they be kindly placed before Government for being considered.

I remain, Sir,
Your most obedient
Belur Srinivasiengar
K. N. Srinivasan
Bangalore

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Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen

I crave your permission to move the next proposition on the Agenda. It runs in the following manner.

That this Conference considers the recommendations of the Committee, under the heads 1. Representative Assembly 2. Legislative Council and 3. Standing Committee (this is entirely new) will be dealt with separately and the remarks corresponding them will be mainly on the principles involved thereunder. I cannot trouble you with the details of rules suggested for promulgation, in Annexure II, appended to the Report.

I. Representative Assembly.

The recommendations of the Committee in this respect, if accepted and adopted, defeat the very objects of the inauguration and the continued existence of this purely popular body and they threaten to impair the confidence of the loyal subjects of the State in the undoubted and unbounded sympathy of His Highness the Maharaja with aspirations of His loyal subjects to take intelligent part in the administration of their affairs.

Our Gracious Sovereign is not one of those Rulers whom the Maharaja of Kapurthala had to remind in the following words, " we must realise that we cannot stand still as detached spectators of the remarkable political progress of the World quickened by the War but must take our part therein and show the heartiest sympathy with the spirit of the age." We are also sure that our Maharaja in the words of another distinguished Ruling Prince, " deems it his duty to procure his beloved sons

for the happy day when they will become capable for conducting their own affairs and thus help him in good and progressive administration."

Consistently with the above, the announcement makes it clear that the Assembly shall have a place in the Constitution.

The object of the incorporation of the Assembly by the then gracious Ruler is clear. The distinguished Statesman, Rowan Hongsoherlu, said in the course of his message to the Representatives, in1861, " the one great problem to be solved by Indian Statesmen is how the people could be sended from the crushing influence of officialdom..... Now that the Era of Representative Institutions and Self-Government is infusing new life into Nation, the Government must look to you as the representatives of the people to spread these ideas amongst them and rouse them to sense of their true interest and importance."

No detailed enquiry is needed to convince that the Representative Assembly was meant to be a "beginning" towards Responsible Government.

Forty two years have rolled by. Minto-Morley scheme, Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in the neighbouring British Territory have in the same measure, responded to the democratic instinct in the citizens of that Territory. We need not consider other foreign instances like Egypt or Angora.

The authors of the Report have miserably failed to give a place to the Assembly in the Constitution.

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Perhaps Constitution in their view, has no place for it. A careful perusal of pages 8 to 11 of their treatise convinces one, that they have laboured in vain to compare the Assembly to existing institutions in other civilised countries. They had to come to something a finding that the Representative Assembly could not fully take the place even of a referendum, as in Swiss Constitution.

In no form of Government, we now existing, an institution consisting a body of elected representatives, doing nothing but petitioning the authorities, and even that function is subjected entirely to the control of the Executive.

The Assembly as the Committee wants it to be will be more akin or in better expression "a glorified Durbar" if not a " a licensed Debating Society."

The Committee says finally that the Assembly "can be made to serve two important ends viz., the initiative and the referendum. But in the very next few instances they also say that they cannot as in the case of a Referendum bring mandates regarding matters which have been referred to people by Government or legislature, especially in the case of bills touching closely and directly the people's daily life.

Nominations to the Assembly without which it has been existing for the last 40 long years-were suggested in the announcement.

An observation that that is unnecessary and these steps retrograde progress in the path of liberalism could very well have been made in the report. That has not been done. On the other some pages have been written

suggesting that that step is not unnecessary.

While the constituting the Assembly as merely consultative they do not even say that it should be consulted in all matters. They add words "ordinarily" and retain "in all important" matters, when the question of consultation arises.

"Ordinarily" and "important" are not defined. The President continues to be official and his discretion continues to be unfettered. Too much regarding the place of the Assembly.

As regards the recommendations of the Committee pertaining to its powers viz., taxation, legislation, Interpellation, representations, resolutions, discussion of the budget- the less said the better.

Perhaps the Standing Committee that has to decide subjects to be discussed, and the representatives they put in the hands President or Government who has absolute discretion to cut off the subjects and prevent them from going even before the Standing Committee.

With some experience of the Representative Assembly as it stands and in the light of the observations made, I have no hesitation inn stating that the recommendations of the Committee do not in the least better the status of the Assembly and meet the political wants of its members.

II. Legislative Assembly.

The announcement does not limit the scope of the recommendations in respect of this body though the maximum number 50 is fixed.

As per recommendations of the Committee the executive

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will not as before, be responsible to the Legislative Council. The Committee suggest that the number elected ought to be 2', and nominated non-officials 3, nominated officials 20 excluding the Dewan and the two Councillors.

It will thus be seen that the percentage of elected non officials will only be 41.

Mysore is the second largest Native State. Even the smaller State of Travancore has 23 elected, out of 50 members and that works up to 50% of elected non-officials. I may add here that the Deputy President in that Council as in Baroda is a non official member. I have already taken much of your time. There are 24 more recommendations to be put before you.

III Boards to deal in part Board.

The Government does not say anything about this; but the Committee feels that it fails in its duty cast on it by Government and says that, "Standing Central Boards of Experts representing varied interests, as Statutory bodies outside the legislature and constituted for advising the Government and Legislature in all matters touching intensive development must continue to be an outstanding characteristic of the Mysore Polity." They further observe "these are indeed sure roads to freedom between the Government and the people which are free from many of the pitfalls that beset in the path of the Responsible Government."

They further recommend that these Committees should have a place in the Constitution. The ideas underlying herein are original but not all practical and useful. I must admit that in the Report there are noble sentiments

worthy of the philosophic depths of the chairman but it clearly manifests that he has not understood the wants- if not the justifiable aspirations of the loyal subjects of His Highness the Maharaja. It was quite possible to give real power to the Assembly over the executive limb of the Government,without in any matter affecting the acknowledged and the undoubted Sovereign rights of His Highness.

Those are attempts made in the Report to idealise failure to obtain political rights on the part of the people and while doing so the Authors have indented on Epithets and Circumlocutions and have endeavoured to offer consolations to the disappointed subjects.

Obviously a mistake of the actual, for the ideal has been committed to the detriment of the honest desires of the people of Mysore. We are not enthusiastic about the reforms. We are not enthusiastic about the report; we are sadly disappointed.

Even the tradition underlying this remarkable document cannot be estimated at its face value as some of the theories propounded are actionary.

In the words of the Editorial of a leading Indian Daily the report is " a remarkable document as remarkable in its own way as say, Filmer's Patriarcha or Bolinbroke's -idea of a Patriot King- and like the latter it is calculated to _alarm_ the reader than _reassure_ him."

I feel, I should have been given more time. I want to make some more remarks about the questions of (1)Breadth of Franchise (2) Voteing power (3) Relationship of the Assembly to the Council, the uselessness of the consultative Agency of the Assembly as recommended etc., but I am forbidden for want of time; Gentlemen our present

Sovereign has been ruling us, for over 30 years and His Rule has been decidedly wise and benevolent. It is but right for us to ask Him to graciously brush aside the views indicated by the Committee and grant real and substantial power of the purse and legislation to the Assembly which was inaugurated of His beloved father and fostered by himself for the last two decades.

I now ask you Gentlemen to unanimously carry the proposition.